



USING MARIJUANA UNDER THE AGE OF 21

Choosing to use cannabis (marijuana, hashish, weed, pot, edibles, etc.) before 21 can affect the plans you've made for your future.

WEED USE AFFECTS YOUR PERFORMANCE

These facts about how cannabis use influences your body and brain will help you make informed decisions about your health.



BRAIN

Human brains do not fully develop until our mid-20s. Regular cannabis use before then can lead to harmful physical changes that can permanently impact your memory, learning, and attention.^{1,2}



LUNGS

Like tobacco, smoking cannabis can harm your lungs. Marijuana smoke has many of the same toxins and chemicals found in tobacco smoke, and inhaling them increases your risk of developing lung problems.^{3,4}



SUCCESS

Research shows that if you start using cannabis before you are 18 or use cannabis regularly you may be at higher risk for:

- Skipping classes¹²
- Getting lower grades¹³
- Dropping out of school¹⁴
- Unemployment or not getting the kind of job you want^{14,15}



DRIVING

Cannabis can negatively affect the skills that are needed to drive safely, including reaction time, coordination and concentration, increasing the risk of getting into a car crash.^{10,11}



MENTAL HEALTH

Regular marijuana users are significantly more likely than nonusers to develop long-lasting mental disorders, including anxiety and depression.^{5,6} Individuals with a family history of mental illness are at an even higher risk.^{7,8,9}



YOUR RECORD

If you are under 21 and caught in possession of weed without a valid medical marijuana ID, you will face legal consequences, as will the person over 21 who supplied you with weed.



WEED USE ISN'T THAT POPULAR

In 2018, only about 1 in 5 high school students in Illinois reported using cannabis in the past 30 days.¹⁶

For more about Illinois' cannabis law, check out [LetsTalkCannabisIL.com/The-Law](https://letsstalkcannabisil.com/the-law).

If you have additional questions regarding nonmedical marijuana use in Illinois, please email letstalkcannabisil@prevention.org.



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